

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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USMISSION GENEVA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 0121

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB XG

SUBJ: GENEVA EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE

REF: OSLO 0116

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1. THE TWO-TIERED, FOUR COUNTRY PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE FEBRUARY-MARCH GENEVA EAST-WEST TRADE UNION CONFERENCE APPROVED TWO PROPOSED FINAL CONFERENCE DECLARATIONS AT ITS OSLO MEETING DECEMBER 16 AND 17, ONE ON HUMANIZATION OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT, IN GENERAL, AND ONE ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES. TWO OTHER DOCUMENTS DISCUSSING THESE MATTERS AT GREATER LENGTH HAD BEEN APPROVED AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING AND CIRCULATED TO CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS AS WORKING DOCUMENTS. NORWEGIAN TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY SANDEGREN CONSIDERS THE TOXIC SUBSTANCES DECLARATION (PREPARED BY THE NORWEGIANS AND BRITISH) FINE, BUT FEELS THE GENERAL HUMANIZATION DECLARATION MAY NEED MORE "MEAT" IN THE FORM OF GREATER SUBSTANTIVE DETAIL AND BLUEPRINTS FOR NATIONAL ACTION AND ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS, BUT NOT AS FAR AS FOLLOW-UP ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IS CONCERNED.

2. CREATION OF SOME PERMANENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IS CONCERNED.

2. CREATION OF SOME PERMANENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IS THE CHIEF SOVIET AIM, WHICH THE OTHERS ARE RESISTING. THERE IS NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT FOLLOW UP IN ANY OF THE PREPARATORY DOCUMENTS AND THIS WILL BE A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR THE CONFERENCE TO RESOLVE. THE SOVIETS WOULD LIKE A SECRETARIATE, THE MAXIMUM OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, OR AT LEAST A SERIES OF SYMPOSIA, ETC. THE GERMANS AND OTHERS PREFER TO KEEP EVERYTHING RESTRICTED TO THE ILO FORMAT AND CONTINUE USING THE FOUR ILO GOVERNING BODY WORKER REPRESENTATIVES AS A FRAMEWORK FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. THE NORWEGIANS ARE INTERESTED IN PRACTICAL FOLLOW-UP ON THE SUBSTANCE, AND OPPOSED TO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE. WHETHER THE FOUR-COUNTRY PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WILL BE USED AT THE NEXT STAGE OR BROADENED TO INCLUDE OTHER COUNTRIES REMAIN TO BE SEEN, ACCORDING TO SANDEGREN.

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3. ANOTHER MEETING OF THE FOUR-COUNTRY PREPARATORY COMMITTEE IS TO BE HELD IN MID-JANUARY. THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN PUSHING A MAXIMUM OF ACTIVITY AND CONSULTATIONS IN THE PREPARATION, INCLUDING BI-LATERAL CONTACTS, WHILE THE OTHERS HAVE TRIED TO RESTRICT THE PREPARATION TO MEETINGS WHERE ALL FOUR ARE PRESENT. WHILE THE PREPARATORY WORK MIGHT SEEM TO BE COMPLETED, THE NORWEGIANS ARE ANXIOUS TO CON-

TINUE HOLDING REGULAR (PRESUMABLY MONTHLY) MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE TO MAKE CERTAIN NO HITCHES DEVELOP.

4. SANDEGREN ALLOWED EMBASSY LABATT TO READ THE TWO DECLARATIONS, AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY ALLOWED HIM TO READ THE WORKING DOCUMENTS (MEMCON OF DEC 3). THE GENERAL ONE REFERS TO CONTINUING AND NEW PHYSICAL, CHEMICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WORK ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS IN ALL COUNTRIES, THE OBLIGATIONS OF GOVERNMENTS TO ENACT LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS OBLIGATING EMPLOYERS AND MANAGERS TO RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS AND THE NECESSITY OF TRADE UNIONS TO PRESS THEM TO DO SO. IT REFERS TO GENERAL EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AS WELL AS INTERNAL POLLUTION AT THE WORK PLACE, TO BOTH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND WORKER AND UNION PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT AS UNION TOOLS TO ATTACK THE PROBLEMS AND TO THE NECESSARY UNILATERAL RIGHT OF TRADE UNION SAFETY COMMITTEEMEN TO STOP PRODUCTION IN CASES OF IMMEDIATE DANGER. THE DECLARATION ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES IS OF A MORE TECHNICAL NATURE.

5. ASKED IF THE SOVIETS ACKNOWLEDGED THE EXISTENCE OF WORK ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS IN THE SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPEA, SANDEGREN SAID CERTAINLY, AS DEMONSTRATED BY THEIR AGREEING TO THE DECLARATION. HE ADDED THAT KANAIEV, THE SOVIET ON THE COMMITTEE, AT ONE POINT HAD TRIED TO INSERT A REFERENCE TO DIFFERING PROBLEMS IN "SOCIALIST" AND "CAPITALIST" COUNTRIES, TO WHICH SANDEGREN SAID HE ANSWERED THAT THE NORWEGIANS CONSIDERED NORWAY NOT "CAPITALIST" BUT A MIXED ECONOMY OF SOCIALIST INSPIRATION AND CON-

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SIDERED THE SOVIET UNION COMMUNIST, NOT "SOCIALIST", AT WHICH POINT KANAIEV LAUGHED AND DROPPED THE MATTER. SANDEGREN ADDED THAT KANAIEV IS CONGENIAL, WITH A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR. SANDEGREN WENT ON TO EMPHASIZE THAT, AS HE SAID LO PRESIDENT ASPENGREN HAD STRESSED TO MICHAEL BOGGS OF THE AFL-CIO (REFTTEL), THE SOVIETS WERE BEING PUT TO THE TEST. IF THEY MISUSE THE PROCESS (OF EAST-WEST TRADE UNION TALKS ON PRACTICAL SUBJECTS) FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, THE WHOLE THING WILL BE CALLED OFF AS FAR AS THE NORWEGIANS ARE CONCERNED. SECONDLY, THEY ARE BEING PUT TO THE TEST, AND THIS WILL EMERGE IN THE FOLLOW-UP PROCESS, TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND DEAL, FROM A TRADE UNION POINT OF VIEW, WITH THE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION IN THEIR OWN SOCIETY, IN THIS

CASE THE EXISTENCE AND CORRECTION OF WORK
ENVIRONMENT PROBLEMS WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION AND
EASTERN EUROPE.

6. SANDEGREN WAS ALSO PREPARING TO ATTEND A NORDIC
TRADE UNION COUNCIL OR SECRETARIAT MEETING JANUARY 9
TO PREPARE A NORDIC TRADE UNION CONFERENCE LATER
THIS MONTH TO DISCUSS THE WORK ENVIRONMENT SIT-
UATION AND PROBLEMS IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES IN
PREPARATION FOR THE GENEVA MEETING.
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